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# Kidnaping seen as political plea

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The kidnaping of Patricia Hearst may be a warning that the poor of our country cannot be expected to placidly carry the weight of their troubles indefinitely, say several professors and political activists.

The Hearst kidnaping shows that as long as our society ignores social equality, we are all vulnerable to the desperate acts of the mistreated, said Albert Cafagna, asst. professor of philosophy.

The fact that many of the members of the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) are ex-convicts suggests that any current revolutionary movement in America finds a breeding grounds in our prisons, Cafagna said this week.

"There are many people who feel that the prisons are now full of political prisoners, not criminals," he said.

The kidnaping illustrates the inability of the American government to fulfill the needs of its people," said Barb Lelli, member of the southern Africa liberation support committee, though she could not speak officially for the group.

"The absurdity of America's poor sending their nickels and dimes to Hearst is astounding," Lelli said. "They stay true to the ideology of not accepting charity in the face of a system which does not even make room for them to get work."

Mitchell Stengel, asst. professor of economics, said that the issues the SLA has raised are certainly valid ones. The fate of the poor in this country looks no better in 1974 than it did in 1960 before all our help programs, he said.

The point of the kidnaping, says Barb Riemer, asst. professor of psychology, is to make a correlation between the imprisoned SLA members and kidnaped Patricia Hearst. The SLA members were innocent, convicted only because of their SLA affiliation, according to the kidnapers. Innocent Patricia Hearst was kidnaped only because of her affiliation with her "ruling class" parents, Riemer said.

"The SLA perceives Hearst as a prisoner of war rather than a kidnaping victim," said Cafagna. This is an example of "radical disobedience." They do not recognize the "legitimate authority" of the state, they have instead taken matters into their own hands in order to meet their political ends, he said.

Cafagna said that their actions will only be justifiable if it is clear from the consequences of the kidnaping that it was not a criminal act, but one of a political character enacted by "hungry" people.

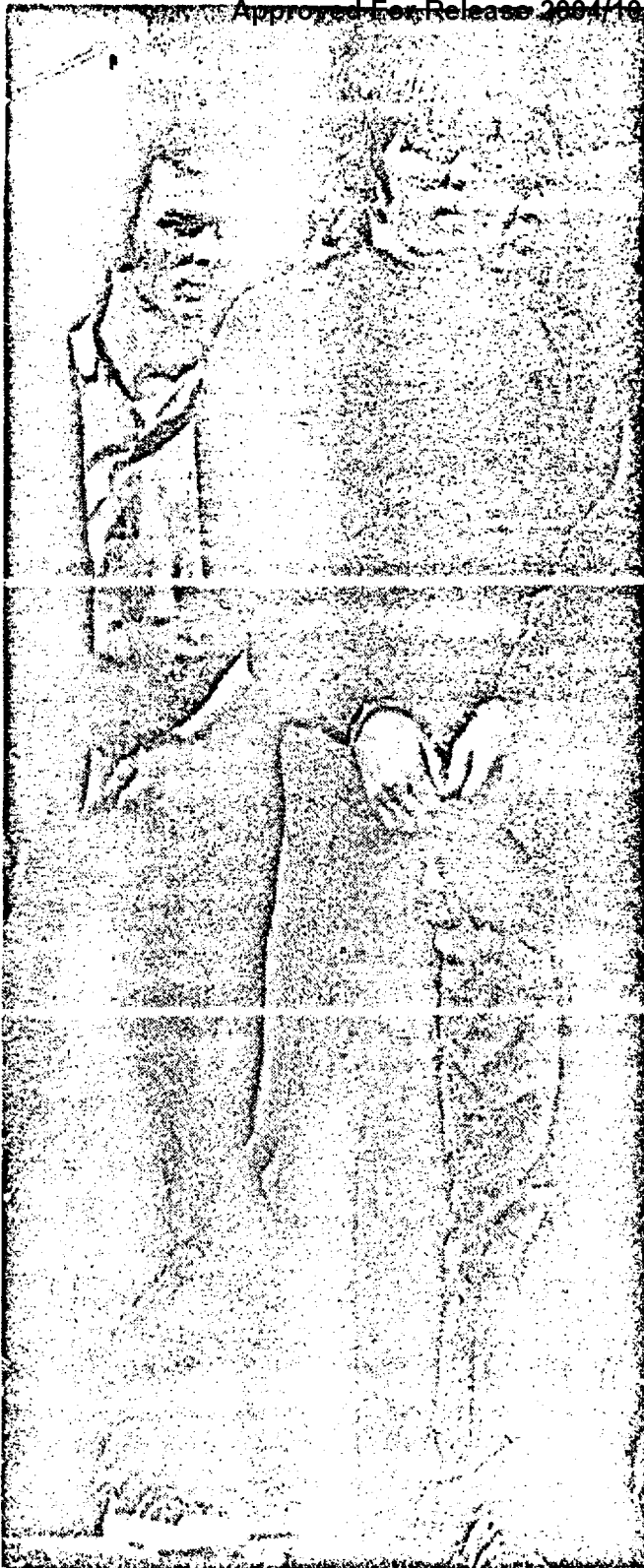
"It is obvious that they are prepared to kill Hearst. They are also willing to give up their own lives for the cause," he said.

Radical organization that can really make a change is a long-term thing, said Lelli. This kidnaping is a one-shot deal and has not attacked the root of the problem.

"This terrorist action on the part of the SLA has not been effective because it has not made us see the oppression it wants us to respond to," said Doyle O'Connor, former member of Crisis in America.

The police will probably use this to disrupt all the leftist organizations in the San Francisco area, O'Connor said.

"Just like the hijackings, more small, obscure political groups will use kidnaping to get publicity. Then the less stable and lunatic will take over until the trend subsides," said Harry Perlstadt, asst. professor of sociology. "The possibility for violence will increase with the later kidnapings because the less



## SLA members

Wearing handcuffs and leg irons, Russell Little, dark sweatshirt, and Joseph Remiro, left, leave the Martinez, Calif., courthouse Tuesday. The two, members of the Symbionese Liberation Army, are charged with the murder of Oakland Schools superintendent Marcus Foster.

AP Wirephoto

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